

Thank you for having me, my name is James Calabresi and I am a student at Trinity College. I am testifying in favor of Raised Senate Bill 19. Every person I know has a story about sexual assault or misconduct. Half of these experiences have happened in their time in higher education or since moving on from high school. Examples range from an ex girlfriend of mine was catcalled near campus, people have felt unsafe during parties or when trying to go to parties, title nine reports have been filed en-masse relating to specific fraternities and specific people (I am a former RA so I would know), a friend of mine was assaulted, people have been scared for their lives, they have been deeply threatened and a burden of rebuilding their trust and faith in order to simply move through, indeed live, in their institution has been placed on their shoulders.

My story of sexual misconduct is small, minor even compared to the instances cited above, but is still one that I wish to share today. I was in my theatre and Dance Major department's building and was walking from a meeting with a professor and started talking to a staff member. Next, another staff member, not a professor, not a maintenance person, but still a full-time employee within the department made some sort of joke and stood awkwardly close to myself. I slightly, almost unnoticed, moved away, continuing to mostly face the first woman I was talking to, but then after making another joke (I still wasn't laughing at them) the second woman stepped across the distance between us and put her hand on my shoulder thinking she had made connection with me and could do so. This made me a bit uncomfortable so I flinched away she then proceeded to say "don't flinch". It could have also been "don't back away", I remember having to write about the experience afterwards and after some time shared it with a friend group who was very supportive. I was pretty deeply upset, I had trusted her before then but never considered that there would be some kind of attraction to me from her, which seemed obvious after the incident. Fortunately, this person didn't do anything additional to make me feel unwelcome since, indeed she seemed to have sensed in some way that my reaction was instinctual and so ever since then has been polite and not gotten close to touching me. But needless to say, I won't forget the moment all that soon.

I didn't feel it necessary to report this, my RA training and self-discipline told me I could handle it. But that might not have been even an option in my mind if I were a woman, or if this happened while in my first year at college. Women, I have heard personally, often have to deal with a legion of frightening factors that come into play if one has to file a restraining order, take a semester off, or talk to the Deans' and Title 9 coordinator about incidents in intimate detail.

For me, looking back on all the other interactions with this woman made me uneasy. It's an uncomfortable situation to be in for anyone to have to consider the amount a person is attracted to you by someone so clearly in a position that overlooks you. Again, this is often far worse for women or non-binary people. This is why I urge you, with all of who I am before you, please, for your communities, for young people everywhere, let us build a future where young men like me don't have to have their feelings overlooked, so RAINN doesn't have to report how young women under 24 experience thrice the rate of sexual violence as the general public, let us build a future where rape culture and rape, are documented- and **always** shunned.

Vote. For Senate Bill 19.

James Calabresi